

Late Backup

Item No. 33

11/12/2015

Initiated by Mayor Adler and CM Pool

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the Austin Convention Center, which was last expanded in 2002, has seen steady, positive growth, and is experiencing lost business due to lack of availability and facility limitations; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Convention Center completed a 2014 Council-approved planning process to develop the Austin Convention Center's Long-Range Master Plan ("Plan") led by Gensler, the consultant team; and

WHEREAS, the Gensler team approach included stakeholder involvement and in-depth facility and financial assessments; and

WHEREAS, the Plan recommended by Gensler was reviewed by the Urban Land Institute's Technical Assistance Panel, pursuant to Resolution No. 20141211-218; and

WHEREAS, the Urban Land Institute's Technical Assistance Panel supports the Gensler recommendations as described in the Plan;

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes that the recommendations included in the Plan will require on-going collaboration with key stakeholders, as well as require future City Council action approving land acquisition, financing plans consisting of funding from Hotel Occupancy Tax and Austin Convention Center revenue but not property taxes, and construction activities as recommended in the Plan; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Council adopts the Austin Convention Center's Long-Range Master Plan, attached as Exhibit "A," as a long-term planning vehicle.

[(MAYOR ADLER) BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is also hereby directed to consider and bring forth to the City Council Economic Opportunity Committee recommendations on the following related issues before requesting any further Council action related to implementation of the Master Plan, including acquisition of real estate:

1. Assessment of the long term viability of the convention and exhibition industry, given further, comprehensive analysis of current industry data, historical trends, and projections, including the projected market demand for Austin Convention Center space.
2. Other potential venue needs in Austin, and the impact of the Master Plan's conceptual finance plan on the capacity to fund other potential projects through the venue tax.
3. Options for provision of a "Community Room" within the Austin Convention Center complex to allow for low-cost or no-cost use of meeting space by community-based and nonprofit groups, with certain exceptions provided to Food and Beverage requirements to enhance the ability of all groups to utilize Convention Center space.
4. Options for provision of local business opportunities within the Convention Center complex, including:
 - a. Opportunities for owners of property potentially to be acquired for the convention center to participate in a public/private equity interest in retail space developed as part of the convention center complex.
 - b. Preferential opportunities for rental of retail space by local Austin businesses participating in a small business incubation and mentorship program.
 - c. Other opportunities for provision of unique, local retail and restaurant offerings within the Convention Center that are attractive and accessible to both convention attendees and Austin community.

5. Use of open space and other facilities developed as part of the Convention Center expansion for free and meaningful community events and programs of interest to the Austin community, potentially including:
 - a. Cultural celebrations, musical offerings, and performing arts programs that are compelling to Austin and its diverse community.
 - b. Opportunities for free community participation in convention sessions related to technical, vocational, and other pressing issues.
6. Addition and enhancement of publicly accessible open spaces and green spaces within the convention center complex area, including:
 - a. Enhancement of Brush Square in coordination with the State of Texas.
 - b. Enhancement of Palm Park/Palm School in coordination with Travis County.
 - c. Incorporation of other green space initiatives in coordination with the Waller Creek Conservancy.
 - d. Incorporation of unique open spaces, plazas, and water features to provide attractive outdoor venues for pedestrians and community gatherings.
7. Opportunities to improve walkability and downtown mobility, including incorporation of sidewalks, bike paths, planned transit improvements.
8. Plans for comprehensive assessment and mitigation of the potential impacts of the Convention Center expansion to downtown auto traffic, including the timing and scope of planned traffic impact analyses that:
 - a. Takes into consideration the impact of various location options for the tower proposed as part of the non-contiguous expansion
 - b. (CM POOL) A comprehensive analysis of traffic volumetric (not peak) impacts predicted or modeled along the entire length of Cesar Chavez from MoPAC west to east of I-35 as well as an analysis regarding volumetric (not peak) traffic impacts that result from options proposed by Texas Department of Transportation and the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority to expand MoPAC capacity to 2025 and beyond.

- c. (CM POOL) If City modeling data indicate support for another hotel adjacent to the Convention Center, report on whether the northern edge of the Convention Center area along Fourth Street could be a location for the hotel and whether that would impact traffic flow.
9. Opportunities to integrate workforce development and training programs for employees in the convention and hospitality industries, in order to facilitate pathways toward living wage careers.
10. Plans for continued engagement of the City Council and Austin Community to ensure that the Convention Center expansion is designed as an aesthetically pleasing enhancement, which incorporates features that would be meaningful for both the activities of the Convention Center and the overall Austin Community.]

ADOPTED: _____, 2015

ATTEST: _____
Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk